

March 19, 1976

PRESIDENT: Senator Cavanaugh. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Members of the Legislature, I did move originally to divide the question. When we were dealing with definitions there came a point when I thought I saw three sections or four, whatever the number was, which could be taken together and I told Senator Schmit I had no objection to these all being adopted at once and they didn't have to be divided. Now some of you get tired and you feel that the issues are not very important. Senator Goodrich's motion, I feel, has no merit whatsoever. And by the way, Senator Schmit, I corrected my misstating what was in this bill about the trust fund money. I guess he had been on the phone then too, but nevertheless, there are provisions in this bill which if the introducer were asked about, he would have to take the time and read through that section and see what the entire section is saying and what it is directing itself to. To ask the body to adopt all of these amendment and then come up with some notion that you are going to go senator by senator and he or she is going to look through all this bill and write down every motion that would be contemplated on the bill without knowing what somebody else's motion is going to do to change the bill is, I think, ridiculous. If my child came home from school and told me that a teacher had told the students that they were running a mock legislature and did that, I'd say no, you're running a mockery of the legislature and that doesn't even happen down there. I offered an amendment a second ago which had to be modified because something was adopted in the meantime that changed the section that I was trying to deal with. I think what Senator Goodrich offered is untenable and it is unworkable if the intent is to try to discuss the merits of the bill. On the other hand, if he will frankly stand up and say that he doesn't want the bill discussed, that if you can suspend the rules allowing a member to seek division of a question so that you can cut off all debate, then at least he's being honest. But I defy Senator Goodrich to stand up on this floor and say that he thinks that by making a motion to take all these amendments and adopt them, there is going to be an opportunity to consider them deliberately and responsibly, he can't carry out that. Now he might do it, he might do it because he offered this motion. So I get away from Senator Goodrich and deal with the motion. We have rules and as I say, they can be ignored if everybody ignores them but when a rule is invoked and it is invoked seriously and on a serious issue, then I think it ought to be dealt with seriously. If there is no basis for dividing the question, why did we have the number of amendments which were offered which were not all offered by me? Why did we have the number of amendments adopted that were adopted? None of mine, because there were other members of the legislature interested and properly going through this bill even though the tail bone might have gotten tired on one end and the head bone had gotten tired on the other end. As long as we are in session, we are legislators and our minds should be kept clear. We should function as well at the end as we did at the beginning. If we reach the point where that type of functioning cannot occur and people want to throw in the towel and say, let's take the whole thing as it is, then I do believe it is time to adjourn. I'm opposing Senator Goodrich's motion to suspend the rules therefore doing away with the right to divide the question.